4 December 2013 - Scotland and northern England is facing a short, sharp, stormy spell of weather over the next 48 hours with winds in excess of 80 mph expected in western Scotland.

The Met Office has issued Amber "be prepared" warnings for the north and west Scotland and parts of north and eastern England with wind gusts in excess of 80 mph expected for tomorrow, Thursday 5 December.

Amber means you need to be prepared to change your plans and protect you, your family and community from the impacts of the severe weather. The high winds are likely to have an impact on transport, ferry services and lead to speed restrictions on some bridges.

A Yellow "be aware" weather warning for wind is still in place for the rest of Scotland and parts of northern England, and North Wales, the Midlands and East Anglia with wind gusts of 60-70 mph expected in this area.

Steve Willington, Chief Forecaster at the Met Office said: "A rapidly deepening Atlantic depression is forecast to move east to the north of Scotland during Wednesday night and Thursday morning. This will bring westerly gales to northern and some central parts of the UK, which will veer northerly and temporarily bring much colder arctic air southwards across northern areas before easing into Friday.

"The public should be prepared for significant disruption to travel, especially across the Central Belt and western Scotland during Thursday morning's rush hour and Northern England during the day on Thursday."

Martin Thomson, Winter Resilience Manager for Transport Scotland, said: "As always, Transport Scotland is working with transport operators and our partners in local authorities as well Police Scotland to make sure that the most useful and up to date information is given to those who need it most. The Scottish Government is monitoring the developing situation to assess what impact this warning will have on Scotland. They remain in regular contact with the Met Office, and other partners, and stand ready to respond as required based on forecast impacts.

"We would also urge the travelling public to consider the conditions before they set-off on their journeys. They should listen to radio reports, visit the Traffic Scotland website or twitter feed and consider police advice."

The combination large waves, high tides and surge may also cause some coastal flooding in the Northern and Western Isles, some Irish Sea coasts and along the East Coast of England and southeast coast of Scotland .

John Curtin, the Environment Agency's Head of Incident Management, said: "Impacts could include flooding affecting some coastal properties and communities. Coastal paths and promenades could be highly dangerous as there is an increased risk of being swept out to sea. People are warned to stay away from the shoreline.

"The Environment Agency is monitoring the situation closely, working alongside partners including the Met Office and local authorities. Environment Agency teams are out on the ground confirming that flood defences are in good working order, monitoring sea levels and preparing to issue flood warnings if necessary.

"People should check the Environment Agency website or follow @EnvAgency and #floodaware on Twitter for the latest flood outlook, and to sign up to receive free flood warnings."

Icy conditions may also develop on some roads across Scotland on Thursday night and Friday morning. This is expected to be a short-lived cold snap, with temperatures quickly recovering to near normal over the weekend.

Follow @metoffice for weather information and follow @metofficeuk for severe weather updates.

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